

HCS HJR 64 -- FREEDOM OF CHOICE IN HEALTH CARE

SPONSOR: Franz (Curtman)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on General Laws by a vote of 9 to 4.

Upon voter approval, this proposed constitutional amendment specifies that each person has a fundamental, natural right to make his or her choice about whether or not to obtain lawful health care services or products and to make and receive direct payment for those services or products. No government official has any authority to compel any person, employer, or health care provider to participate in a health care system; to prohibit a citizen's right to make or receive direct payment for lawful health care services; or to prohibit or penalize the purchase or sale of health insurance in private health care systems. The General Assembly may impose reasonable regulations on the health insurance industry.

These provisions do not affect which health care services a health care provider or hospital is required to provide, affect which health care services are permitted by law, prohibit health care provided under workers' compensation under state law, or withdraw the General Assembly's authority to impose reasonable licensure requirements of those persons or businesses providing health care services or products that might negatively impact the public health or safety.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Net Effect on General Revenue Fund of an income of \$0 or a cost of More than \$7,000,000 in FY 2013, an income of \$0 in FY 2014, and an income of \$0 in FY 2015. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2013, FY 2014, and FY 2015.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the resolution is similar to Proposition C which was approved by the voters in 2010, but this puts the language in the Constitution and not just in statute. There needs to be a statement as to what citizens of the state can do and of their ability to choose when it comes to health care. The federal health care law forces state taxpayers to inevitably pay for abortion services which violates some religious and moral beliefs.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Curtman; Ron Calzone, Missouri First; and Missouri Right to Life.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that the resolution is part of a larger nationwide movement to create a legal mechanism

in which citizens can assert their freedom in making health care decisions and have protection from being required to purchase something they do not want.

Testifying on the bill was Dave Rowland, Freedom Center of Missouri.